

# Mineral Industry Surveys

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## TIN IN JUNE 2005

Domestic consumption of primary tin in June was estimated by the U.S. Geological Survey to be about 3% higher than that in May 2005 and about 5% lower than that in June 2004. Estimated primary tin consumption for the first 6 months of 2005 was the same as that for the first 6 months of 2004.

The Platts Metals Week average composite price for tin in June was \$4.97 per pound, about 5% lower than that in May 2004, and about 16% lower than that in June 2004. The June 2005 average tin price was the lowest average monthly price since May 2004.

In Australia, the Tasmanian State Government granted a lease to Van Dieman Mines Plc to mine tin and sapphires, north of Gladstone in northeast Tasmania. Tasmanian Government officials announced that the tin and sapphires were contained within alluvial wash from an old river channel near the historic Scotia Lead alluvial tin mine. In the 1920s, the Scotia Mine sluiced material from the banks of the Ringarooma River to extract tin. The new mine will use conventional excavation equipment, processing the material through crushing and screening plants (TIN World, 2005b).

In related news, Van Dieman Mines signed a contract with Thailand Smelting and Refining Co., Ltd. (Thaisarco) for the treatment of all its tin concentrates for the next 6 years. The agreement provides for the smelting and purchase of the entire projected mine output of 1,800 to 2,000 metric tons per year (t/yr) of 75% tin concentrate, to yield about 1,350 to 1,500 t/yr of tin (CRU International Ltd., 2005).

In Australia, Bluestone Tin Ltd. announced that since commissioning its concentrator at the Rension tin mine at Zeehan in Tasmania in February, it was now producing 40,000 metric tons per month of tin ore, with the expectation of

producing 5,000 to 6,000 metric tons of tin-in-concentrate in 2006 (TIN World, 2005a).

In Indonesia, major tin producer PT Timah TGK started up its new smelter on Kundur Island, part of the Riau Islands, in June. The smelter was expected to produce 5,000 to 6,000 t/yr of tin, freeing up capacity at Timah's main smelter at Mentok, on Bangka Island, to treat slags which have been stockpiled in the last few years. Timah's total refined tin production capacity is now estimated to be 53,000 t/yr, although current production is 42,000 t/yr. Currently, 6 of Timah's 15 operating offshore dredges are located near Kundur, which is much closer to Singapore than Bangka (CRU International Ltd., 2005).

In Egypt, Gippsland Ltd. announced the completion of the environmental impact assessment (EIA) on its Abu Dabbab tantalum-tin-feldspar deposit. The EIA was submitted in June to the Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency. Abu Dabbab is located 16 kilometers west of the Red Sea within the Central Eastern Desert and is expected to produce 1,500 t/yr of tin, with a mine life of 20 years (CRU International Ltd., 2005).

### Update

On September 9, 2005, the Platts Metals Week composite price for tin was \$4.57 per pound.

### References Cited

- CRU International Ltd., 2005, CRU Monitor—Tin: CRU International Ltd., August, p. 8  
TIN World, 2005a, Bluestone continues development in Tasmania: TIN World, no. 10, p. 4.  
TIN World, 2005b, Mining lease granted for tin and sapphires: TIN World, no. 10, p. 4.

TABLE 1  
SALIENT TIN STATISTICS<sup>1</sup>

(Metric tons, unless otherwise noted)

	2005			
	2004 <sup>P</sup>	May	June	January- June
Production, secondary <sup>e, 2</sup>	10,800	900	900	5,400
Consumption:				
Primary	38,500	3,060	3,140	19,000
Secondary	8,200	765	768	4,600
Imports for consumption, metal	47,600	2,960	NA	NA
Exports, metal	3,650	341	NA	NA
Stocks at end of period	6,140	5,400	5,670	XX
Prices (average cents per pound): <sup>3</sup>				
Metals Week composite <sup>4</sup>	547.30	524.53	497.35	XX
Metals Week New York dealer	409.38	392.50	370.72	XX
London, standard grade, cash	385.00	368.00	345.00	XX
Kuala Lumpur	385.11	365.32	345.57	XX

<sup>e</sup>Estimated. <sup>P</sup>Preliminary. NA Not available. XX Not applicable.

<sup>1</sup>Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits, except prices.

<sup>2</sup>Includes tin recovered from alloys and tinplate. The detinning of tinplate (coated steel) yields only a small part of the total.

<sup>3</sup>Source: Platts Metals Week.

<sup>4</sup>The Metals Week composite price is a calculated formula, not a market price, that includes fixed and finance charges and a risk factor. It is normally substantially higher than other tin prices.

TABLE 2  
METALS WEEK COMPOSITE PRICE<sup>1</sup>

(Cents per pound)

Period	High	Low	Average
2004:			
June	622.44	568.24	589.38
July	583.13	565.64	576.07
August	590.50	563.04	573.74
September	585.04	566.00	576.55
October	586.56	568.98	578.10
November	584.93	570.24	580.02
December	569.06	505.64	555.57
Year	624.98	424.94	547.30
2005:			
January	521.70	492.15	503.78
February	544.11	511.92	523.08
March	555.16	521.08	543.81
April	534.61	521.86	527.02
May	529.88	521.36	524.53
June	514.23	476.28	497.35

<sup>1</sup>The Metals Week composite price is a calculated formula, not a market price, that includes fixed and finance charges and a risk factor. It is normally substantially higher than other tin prices.

Source: Platts Metals Week.

TABLE 3  
TINPLATE PRODUCTION AND SHIPMENTS IN THE UNITED STATES<sup>1</sup>

(Metric tons, unless otherwise noted)

Period	Tinplate waste (waste, strips, cobble, etc.) (gross weight)	Tinplate (all forms)			Shipments <sup>2</sup>
		Gross weight	Tin content	Tin per metric ton of plate (kilograms)	
2004 <sup>P</sup>	W	2,550,000	7,700	3.0	2,190,000
2005:					
January	W	207,000	676	3.3	144,000
February	W	202,000	684	3.4	164,000
March	W	209,000	684	3.3	166,000
April	W	199,000	662	3.3	136,000
May	W	174,000	595	3.4	186,000
June	W	171,000	692	4.0	NA

<sup>P</sup>Preliminary. NA Not available. W Withheld to avoid disclosing company proprietary data.

<sup>1</sup>Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits.

<sup>2</sup>Source: American Iron and Steel Institute monthly publication.

TABLE 4  
U.S. TIN IMPORTS FOR CONSUMPTION AND EXPORTS<sup>1</sup>

(Metric tons)

Country or product	2004 <sup>P</sup>	2005		
		April	May	January- May
<b>Imports:</b>				
<b>Metal (unwrought tin):</b>				
Bolivia	5,060	444	813	2,790
Brazil	4,330	350	275	1,130
Chile	281	20	--	20
China	5,310	315	360	2,030
Indonesia	4,660	181	200	838
Japan	540	--	--	--
Malaysia	6,600	50	161	868
Peru	19,600	2,290	1,130	7,990
Switzerland	178	--	--	--
Thailand	500	--	--	35
United Kingdom	97	--	--	18
Other	472	6	23	151
<b>Total</b>	<b>47,600</b>	<b>3,650</b>	<b>2,960</b>	<b>15,900</b>
<b>Other (gross weight):</b>				
Alloys	5,180	1,100	1,690	4,500
Bars and rods	625	83	101	386
Foil, tubes, pipes	6	--	(2)	(2)
Plates, sheets, strip	509	80	6	164
Waste and scrap	1,950	450	476	1,480
Miscellaneous	3,330	236	226	1,260
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,600</b>	<b>1,950</b>	<b>2,500</b>	<b>7,780</b>
<b>Exports (metal)</b>	<b>3,650</b>	<b>457</b>	<b>341</b>	<b>1,500</b>

-- Zero.

<sup>1</sup>Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

<sup>2</sup>Less than 1/2 unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 5  
CONSUMPTION OF TIN IN THE UNITED STATES, BY FINISHED PRODUCT<sup>1</sup>

(Metric tons of contained tin)

Product	2005							
	2004 <sup>P</sup>	May			June			January- June
		Primary	Secondary	Total	Primary	Secondary	Total	
Alloys (miscellaneous) <sup>2</sup>	2,800	106	--	106	105	--	105	632
Babbitt	264	18	W	18	19	W	19	165
Bar tin and anodes	182	20	W	20	23	W	23	136
Bronze and brass	2,490	171	131	302	173	134	307	1,830
Chemicals	8,490	719	W	719	719	W	719	4,310
Collapsible tubes and foil	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	W
Solder	12,500	679	325	1,000	665	325	990	6,200
Tinning	451	62	--	62	64	--	64	370
Tinplate <sup>3</sup>	7,700	595	--	595	692	--	692	3,990
Tin powder	W	W	--	W	W	--	W	W
White metal <sup>4</sup>	W	W	--	W	W	--	W	W
Other	1,000	85	9	94	78	9	87	538
Total reported	35,900	2,460	465	2,920	2,540	468	3,010	18,200
Estimated undistributed consumption <sup>5</sup>	10,800	600	300	900	600	300	900	5,400
Grand total	46,700	3,060	765	3,820	3,140	768	3,910	23,600

<sup>P</sup>Preliminary. W Withheld to avoid disclosing company proprietary data; included with "Other." -- Zero.

<sup>1</sup>Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

<sup>2</sup>Includes terre metal.

<sup>3</sup>Includes secondary pig tin and tin components of tinplating chemical solutions.

<sup>4</sup>Includes pewter, britannia metal, and jewelers' metal.

<sup>5</sup>Estimated consumption of plants reporting on an annual basis.